

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 BEIRUT 04540 081138Z  
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SAA-01 SSM-03 SES-02 IO-13  
CIAE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00  
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PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 TRSE-00 ACDA-12 NEAE-00 /125 W  
-----129078 081142Z /10

O P 081106Z AUG 78  
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9120  
INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER  
USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM  
CINCUSNAVEUR, LONDON ENG  
CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER  
COMSIXTHFLT  
CTF SIX ZERO  
CTF SIX ONE  
CTF SIX TWO  
CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO  
FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA  
FOSIF ROTA SPAIN  
DIA WASHDC  
CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER  
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I L BEIRUT 4540

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINS, PINT, MILI, ASEC, LE  
SUBJECT: LEBANESE SITUATION: AUGUST 8, 1978 - 1300 HOURS LOCAL

REF: BEIRUT 4505 (DTG 071104Z AUG 78)

1. BEIRUT SECURITY SITUATION.  
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A. SHELLING AND SNIPER ACTIVITY ON THE NIGHT OF 7-8 AUGUST  
WAS LIGHTER THAN OVER THE WEEKEND, BUT STILL SERIOUS. THE ADF  
AND RIGHTISTS TRADED FIRE ALONG THE "TRADITIONAL" AXIS BE-  
TWEEN AIN AR-RUMMANEH AND SHIAH. SEVEN PERSONS WERE KILLED BY  
SNIPER FIRE AS THEY ATTEMPTED TO CROSS THE BEIRUT RIVER BELOW  
SINN AL-FIL. A POLICEMAN, ON GUARD OUTSIDE VILLA MANSOUR,

WHICH IS THE TEMPORARY PARLIAMENT SEAT, WAS KILLED BY A SNIPER.

B. AN ADF COMMUNIQUE SAID THAT THE RIGHTIST MILITIAS ESTABLISHED A LONG-RANGE ARTILLERY POSITION IN AD-DUBAYYAH, NEAR THE DOG RIVER, FROM WHICH THEY SHELLED ADF POSITIONS IN BEIRUT. THE COMMUNIQUE ADDED THAT THE ADF REFRAINED FROM FIRING ON THE GUNS IN AD-DUBAYYAH TO AVOID CAUSING CIVILIAN CASUALTIES IN THE THE CHRISTIAN RESIDENTIAL AREAS NEARBY. (L'ORIENT LE JOUR SAID AT LEAST 65 PEOPLE HAD BEEN KILLED AND 200 WOUNDED SINCE THE FIGHTING BEGAN AUGUST 5.)

C. IN WEST BEIRUT, SIX PERSONS WERE WOUNDED BY SHELLS WHICH IMPACTED IN THE BARBIR HOSPITAL AREA AND IN THE AREAS OF ABU SHAKIR STREET AND TARIQ AL-JADIDAH, WHERE MOST PALESTINIAN AND LEBANESE LEFTIST ORGANIZATIONS HAVE OFFICES, ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS.

## 2. RENEWED RENEGADE SHELLING OF ARMY IN THE SOUTH.

FIVE LEBANESE SOLDIERS WERE WOUNDED AND ONE KILLED AT ABOUT 19:45 HOURS ON AUGUST 7, WHEN RIGHTIST RENEGADES FIRED ARTILLERY AT THE LEBANESE BATTALION WHICH IS BOGGED DOWN AT KAWKABA. THE BOMBARDMENT, ACCORDING TO PRESS COMMENTS, PUT TO REST THE IDEA THAT A COMPROMISE HAD BEEN REACHED TO ALLOW THE ARMY TO PROCEED TO ITS OBJECTIVE IN TIBNIN.

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## 3. PARLIAMENT MEETING ON THE ARMY BILL.

A. DESPITE SNIPER FIRE, PRIME MINISTER AL-HOSS AND 19 MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT SHOWED UP AT THE TEMPORARY PARLIAMENT SEAT FOR AN HOUR-LONG MEETING ON THE BILL TO REORGANIZE THE ARMY, WHICH PROVIDES FOR TWO COMMITTEES TO RUN IT. (FOREIGN AND DEFENSE MINISTER BOUTROS COULD NOT ATTEND BECAUSE OF "CONDITIONS OF INSECURITY.")

B. HOUSE SPEAKER KAMAL ASSAD TOLD PRESS THAT THERE WAS A "COMPLETE IDENTITY OF VIEWS ON THE BROAD LINES OF THE DEFENSE BILL." BOTH ASSAD AND DEPUTY FUAD LAHUD, WHO CHAIRS THE PARLIAMENTARY DEFENSE COMMISSION, SAID THAT THERE WERE "DIS-AGREEMENTS ON DETAILS." (COMMENT: THERE IS LITTLE REASON FOR OPTIMISM THAT AN EFFECTIVE RE-ORGANIZATION OF THE LEBANESE ARMY CAN BE WORKED OUT IN THE CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES.)

## 4. ECONOMIC NOTES.

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF BEIRUT'S CHAMBER OF COMMERCE CALLED FOR "NEUTRALIZATION OF THE ECONOMIC FACILITIES" AND WARNED THAT 120,000 WORKERS ARE THREATENED BY UNEMPLOYMENT CAUSED BY THE

SECURITY SITUATION. THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ALSO REPORTED A "SHARP DROP" (NO FIGURES WERE GIVEN) IN LEBANESE EXPORTS FOR THE MONTH OF JULY, COMPARED TO JUNE 1978, AND FOR THE FIRST HALF OF 1978, COMPARED TO THE FIRST HALF OF 1977. AIR TRAFFIC ACTIVITY WAS DOWN OVERALL BY 20 PERCENT. DEPARTURES OF LEBANESE NATIONALS, HOWEVER, INCREASED DURING JULY THE POUND IS AT LL 2.97/\$1.00.

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## Message Attributes

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